

Town of Chester
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TITLE: AN ACT CONCERNING POSTING LEGAL NOTICES ON THE WEBSITE
OF A MUNICIPALITY

POSITION: Support

POSTING OF PUBLIC NOTICES ON TOWN WEBSITES

H B 5214 meets the all the criteria of good legislation. It allows government to provide better service at a lower cost. Allowing towns to post legal notices on their websites in lieu of daily newspapers provides the community with greater access to important information. There are more homes with internet access in any community than there are subscribers to any one daily publication. Leaving legal notices on the site for the entire duration required by law in advance of action referenced in the notice, rather than the current requirement of one or two days provides much greater transparency to the community. This can be done at minimal cost. By contrast, a small town like Chester spends about \$4,500 per year in fees for such postings.

Obviously, such legislation will not be met favorably by the print media. While this legislation will reduce revenues, their real issue lies in adapting to the rapidly changing world of information technology. Continuing to mandate use of what may be considered an obsolete service will only prolong their facing the enviable change that print media must address. With display advertising, and classified ads, in decline and the explosion of competing sources of information, legal notices are but a minor player in a major shift. Failing to enact this legislation would in essence be providing a subsidy to print media, and that diminishes the integrity of both the media and the legislature.

In the end the driving question is "does this legislation improve service to the community". I believe the answer to that question is an unequivocal yes.

Thomas E. Marsh
First Selectman, Chester